

*400.A.129*  
EX 1851.264

Exhibition, London

1851.

Snow (Robert). -





# ON THE CLOSING OF THE GREAT EXHIBITION.

SKM

Saturday, October 11th, 1851.

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'Tis ended! now's the closing day and hour:  
The sun goes down on this surpassing SHOW:  
All beauty fails, all art, all wealth, all power;  
All feasts must close, all music — let THIS go!

Go, but to dim forgetfulness no prey;  
Go, but obliterating time to cheat  
Whilst earth turns round her axle night and day,  
And there are human hearts on earth to beat.

Be it the boast of ALBERT and the Age,  
Our brows with formal wreaths we need not bind:  
They waive the medal, and emblazoned page,  
Whose Record is the soul of all mankind.

Rising with pains and purpose undisguised,  
Our great and good combined to raise our mean:  
To link, with Royalty uncompromised,  
The poorest factory-girl with England's Queen.

And who shall count the gains henceforth to come  
To us, and ours, and Nations yet unborn?  
Shall, like a baffled child, War break his drum?  
And Peace lift high and higher her teeming horn?

"All this, and more than sages may divine."  
Fain must we cry aloud, "all this, and more,"  
Who saw one PALACE clip both Pole and Line,  
And blaze sky-like from Lapland to Lahore.

The day VICTORIA came in right and might,  
Set wide the gates, and beckoned from her throne  
In state, within a roof and walls of light,  
That shook to storm of anthem-pipes alone:

When, more and more the wildered sense to stun,  
Gems, cloth-of-gold, and gem-like fountain-spray,  
Reflecting to the top the approving sun,  
Made constellations overhead by day.

'Tis done! Now Art to Nature shall repay  
The acres trusted to those CRYSTAL HALLS:  
Upon no bankrupt Stage we end the Play,  
For to a World's applause the curtain falls!

She beckoned to the Nations near and far:

They flew by railway, caravan, and fleet,  
With close-packed wains that groaned with untold ware,  
To pile their costly samples at her feet.

But not as suppliants nor as captives they:  
They flocked like guests invited to a feast;  
To hear the courteous summons, and obey,  
The triumph was of greatest and of least.

Six months one human sea hath ceaseless rolled  
From earth's four corners through that TEMPLE's Gate,  
Serene, unvexed, yet burning to behold,  
To ponder, study, know, and emulate.

Again those wains! the eye no more may scan  
The ordered marvels of that CRYSTAL DOME;  
Again the steam-ship, railway, caravan,  
Their tens of thousands are dispersing home!

Now is the soul with mixed sensations thrilled;  
Now all the mother trembles in the eye;  
For stings arise of duties unfulfilled,  
And opportunities let loiter by.

Yet O, forget not at the latest hour  
To pay a tribute to the master-mind  
Who in his own simplicity and power,  
Left dreaming architects in shame behind.

Yes! PAXTON's praise, and thanks of old and young,  
And high and low, and all that own a heart,  
Shall fan the theme a-glow from tongue to tongue;  
Nor less, from politics and trade

Shall lovers, grey in wedded years, recount  
Their earliest vows of constancy and love,  
What time they met beside that matchless FOUNT,  
With that empyreal TRANSEPT arched above.

